

II. Listing of Claims

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Claims 1-16 (Canceled)

17. (Previously presented) A method for insertion of a tibia fixation member comprising:

- gaining supra patella surgical access to an intramedullary canal of a proximal end of a tibia;
- moving the fixation member substantially posterior to a patella;
- inserting the fixation member into a proximal end of the intramedullary canal
- providing a protective sheath with at least one radiopaque marker;
- positioning the protective sheath to define a passage from a supra patella surgical site into the intramedullary canal of the tibia;
- providing a guide wire with at least one radiopaque marker;
- passing the guide wire within the passage defined by the protective sheath into the intramedullary canal;
- monitoring the position of the protective sheath and guide wire by an image guidance system.

18. (Original) The method of claim 17 wherein the image guidance system comprises an X-ray device.

Claims 19-22 (Canceled)

23. (Previously presented) A method for insertion of a tibia fixation member comprising:

- creating a supra patella surgical access site;
- inserting a substantially tubular protective sheath posterior to a patella such that a distal end is adjacent a proximal end of the tibia;
- accessing the intramedullary canal of the tibia utilizing a cutting tool guided by the protective sheath;
- inserting the fixation member into a proximal end of the intramedullary canal; and
- anchoring the fixation member to the tibia;
- wherein the fixation member defines a plurality of apertures for engaging bone engagement members and for engaging an insertion tool;
- wherein inserting the fixation member further comprises utilizing an insertion tool with an inner shaft threaded to an outer tube on a proximal end and a gripping member on a distal end, the gripping member configured to releasably engage a proximal end of the fixation member.

24-40. (Canceled)

41. (Previously presented) A method for percutaneous insertion of a tibia fixation device, the method comprising:

- providing a sheath having a proximal portion, a distal portion, and an opening extending therebetween;
- creating a percutaneous incision above a patella;
- inserting the distal portion of the sheath through the incision to a position adjacent a proximal portion of a tibia;
- inserting a cutting tool through the sheath and utilizing the cutting tool to create an aperture to the intramedullary canal of the tibia; and
- inserting a fixation device through the sheath into an intramedullary canal of the tibia;
- wherein the proximal portion of the sheath is positioned adjacent a thigh when the distal portion of the sheath is positioned adjacent the proximal portion of the tibia;
- wherein the fixation device is a plate.

42. (Previously presented) The method of claim 41 further comprising utilizing a guide wire to position the plate within the intramedullary canal.

43. (Previously presented) The method of claim 42 further comprising inserting the guide wire through an opening extending along the length of the plate.

44. (Previously presented) The method of claim 43 wherein the distal portion of the sheath includes a radiopaque marker, and wherein the positioning of the distal portion of the sheath adjacent the proximal portion of the tibia comprises monitoring the position of the radiopaque marker using an imaging device.

Claims 45-46 (Canceled)

47. (Previously presented) A method for percutaneous fixation of a tibia, the method comprising:

- creating a suprapatellar percutaneous incision;
- inserting a sheath through the incision posterior to the patella such that a distal portion of the sheath is positioned adjacent a proximal portion of the tibia;
- securing the distal portion of the sheath to the proximal portion of the tibia;
- removing a section of the proximal portion of the tibia to create an opening to an intramedullary canal of the tibia;
- inserting a fixation member through the sheath into the intramedullary canal of the tibia;
- anchoring the fixation member;
- providing an instrument for selectively engaging the fixation member, the instrument having a flange member for selectively engaging an aperture of the fixation member;
- engaging the flange member with the aperture of the fixation member before inserting the fixation member into the intramedullary canal; and
- releasing the flange member from the aperture of the fixation member after inserting the fixation member into the intramedullary canal.

48. (Previously presented) The method of claim 47 wherein anchoring the fixation member comprises extending a bone engagement device through the aperture in the fixation member.

49. (Previously presented) The method of claim 48 further comprising utilizing a guide wire to position the fixation member within the intramedullary canal

50. (Previously presented) The method of claim 49 further comprising inserting the guide wire through an opening extending along the length of the fixation member.

51. (Previously presented) The method of claim 50 wherein the fixation member has a width greater than a thickness.